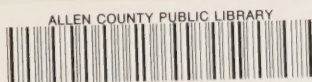




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1862-1962 CENTENNIAL



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
of RICHFIELD

Richfield, Wisconsin

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF RICHFIELD

Richfield, Wisconsin

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List of members
(1863-1963)



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Introduction

If only the frame building which now still stands, the building which we call "our church," could speak, I am sure it could tell us many tales; tales which, of course, we will never know. But because it can not speak we must rely on information compiled by members here and elsewhere, from church records and from memory. The following is a brief history of the church as close to accurate as could be gathered.

It seems that most of the charter members were once members of what we now know as St. Jacobi United Church of Christ. Marriages and baptisms were performed in the homes so no record seems to have been kept of these, but our present membership attests to the fact that there were both, as most of our present members are descendants of the first members.

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Introduction

The first of the two volumes of this series is a history of the city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from its early days as a small settlement to its present status as a major metropolitan area. The second volume is a history of the city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from its early days as a small settlement to its present status as a major metropolitan area.

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An ordained Presbyterian minister, the Rev. John Berk, served St. Jacobi Church. As time went on and more ministers became available those who objected to having a Presbyterian minister locked the church door one Sunday morning. Those who were in favor of having Rev. Berk left the church and organized the First Presbyterian Church of Richfield. The services were held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Wittenberger. Below is a picture of that home.



The Charter Members on November 2, 1862, Were as Follows:

Jacob Frank
 John Frank
 Michael Held
 Frederick Ebeling
 Adam Youngbluth
 Philip Zaun
 Frederick Albrecht
 Gottlieb Griesemann

Carl Bender
 Tobias Hamm
 Carl Hamm
 Carl Lohr
 Gottfried Lohr
 Frederick Bauer
 Peter Britenbach
 Frederick Young

Mr. Wittenberger then donated the land and with the help of other members, cleared the land, sawed the lumber and built the first frame church which now stands. As was the custom in olden days, horse barns were also erected which, of course, have long since been removed.

"FIRSTS" in the Church

The first elders comprising the Session were Adam Youngbluth and Frederick Ebeling.

The first deacons were Michael Held and Carl Lohr.

The first marriage performed in the church was that of Miss Martha Maurer and Mr. George Mayer on June 17, 1922. Just a few months later, namely on November 25, 1922, the marriage of Miss Alyda Hembel and Mr. Reuben Schmidt took place in the church.

The first baby to be baptized in the church was Theodore Schmidt, having been baptized on July 13, 1890.

After diligently searching the records we find no accurate account of Confirmation as we know it today. However, groups were accepted into the church as early as January 1, 1863. This first group consisted of the following:

Henry Green
John Messer
John Herzog
Jacob Kurtz
John Geil

The first to be laid to rest in the cemetery (according to the gravestone still standing) is Mrs. Henry Green in 1870.



THE CONGREGATION

FORMER MINISTERS

Rev. John Berk
1863 - 1866

Rev. H. W. Behle
1868 - 1870

There is also record of
Rev. J. Grob in 1870

Rev. Ludwig Tiege
1876 - 1878

Rev. W. Mendhenke, Rev. T. J. Grenweld
and Rev. E. Schultz
1881



Rev. M. C. Bittle
1882 - 1895



Rev. E. K. Russmann
1895 - 1898



Rev. H. Sill
1900 - 1902

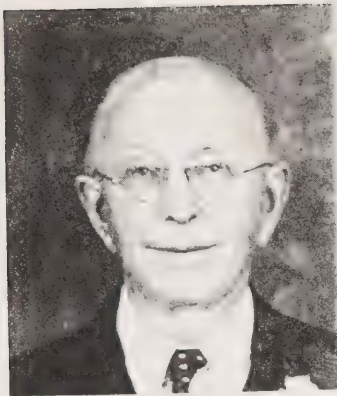
Rev. W. J. Krieger
1903



Rev. F. L. Wolters
1910 - 1917

During this time it is also known
that Rev. B. T. Balzar served us.

FORMER MINISTERS



Rev. T. Schildknecht
1918 - 1944



Rev. L. W. Huenemann
1944 - 1949



Rev. H. Reiners
1951 - 1954



Rev. J. Colvin
1956



The Rev. Cedric H. Jaggard
1957 -

It must be remembered that many students, professors and other ministers served our church at numerous times. The church shared pastors with West Granville Presbyterian Church for many years. We became affiliated with Peace Reformed Church at Jackson in 1918 and severed relations in

1954. It must also be noted that from the very beginning until this date Rev. T. Schildknecht served us the longest. It was during this period of time that our congregation became completely independent of the Milwaukee Presbytery. On May 23, 1954, we again joined the Presbytery of Milwaukee.

1949 REMODELING PROJECTS

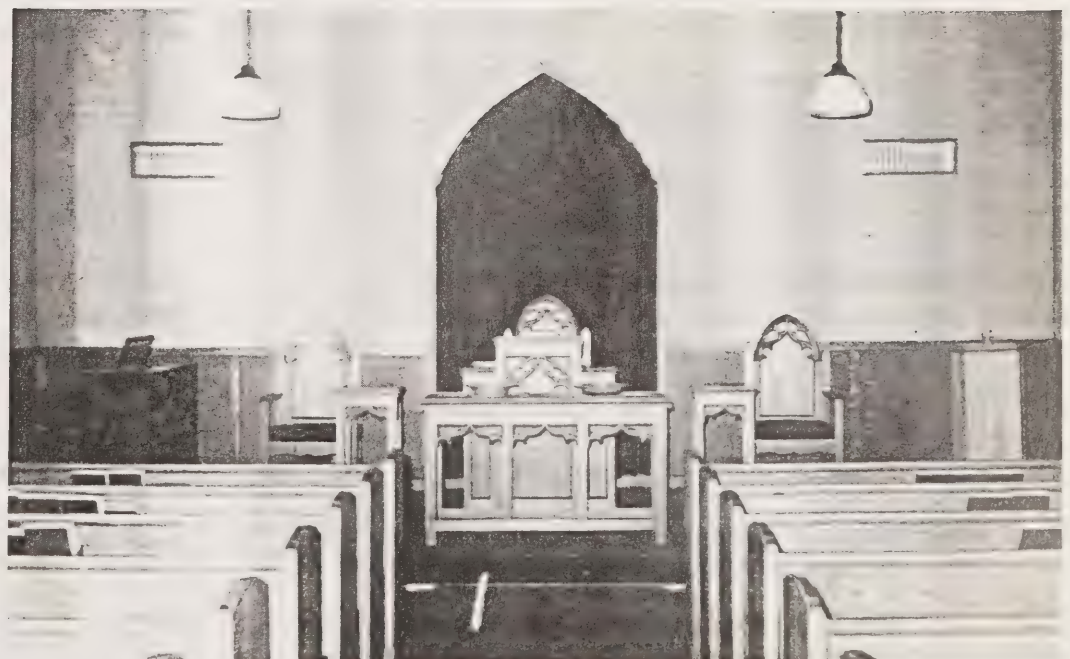
The church building had remained the same for many, many years. On January 2, 1949, an almost complete remodeling of the interior of the building was dedicated to our Lord. It was at this time that the high pulpit was replaced, electricity was made use of, a new oil heating system was installed, carpeting was laid, new

pews were purchased and stained glass windows were added to beautify the building. The walls and ceiling were paneled.

To give you an idea of the extent to which the inside was remodeled, below are two pictures showing the "Before" and "After."



Before



After

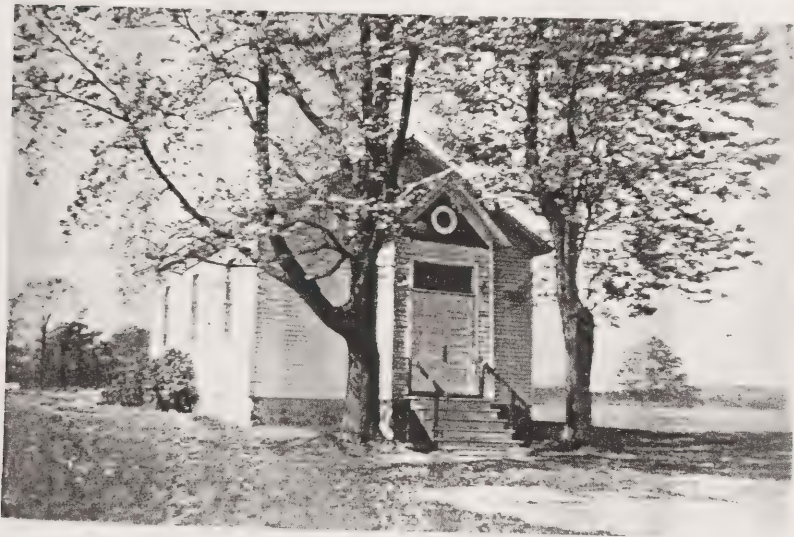
1953 REMODELING PROJECTS

In 1953 it was the congregation's wish to remodel again. At this time a new entrance way was built. A narthex was enlarged as well as space for four additional pews in the sanctuary. A partial basement was dug to make room for a growing Sunday School. Also, lavatories were added and the grounds were landscaped at this time. In 1956 the congregation purchased a new electric organ which we have at the present time.

Below are exterior pictures of the church, again showing the "Before" and "After."

Let us not forget the various items which have since been purchased and also the memorials by the families of loved ones who have passed away.

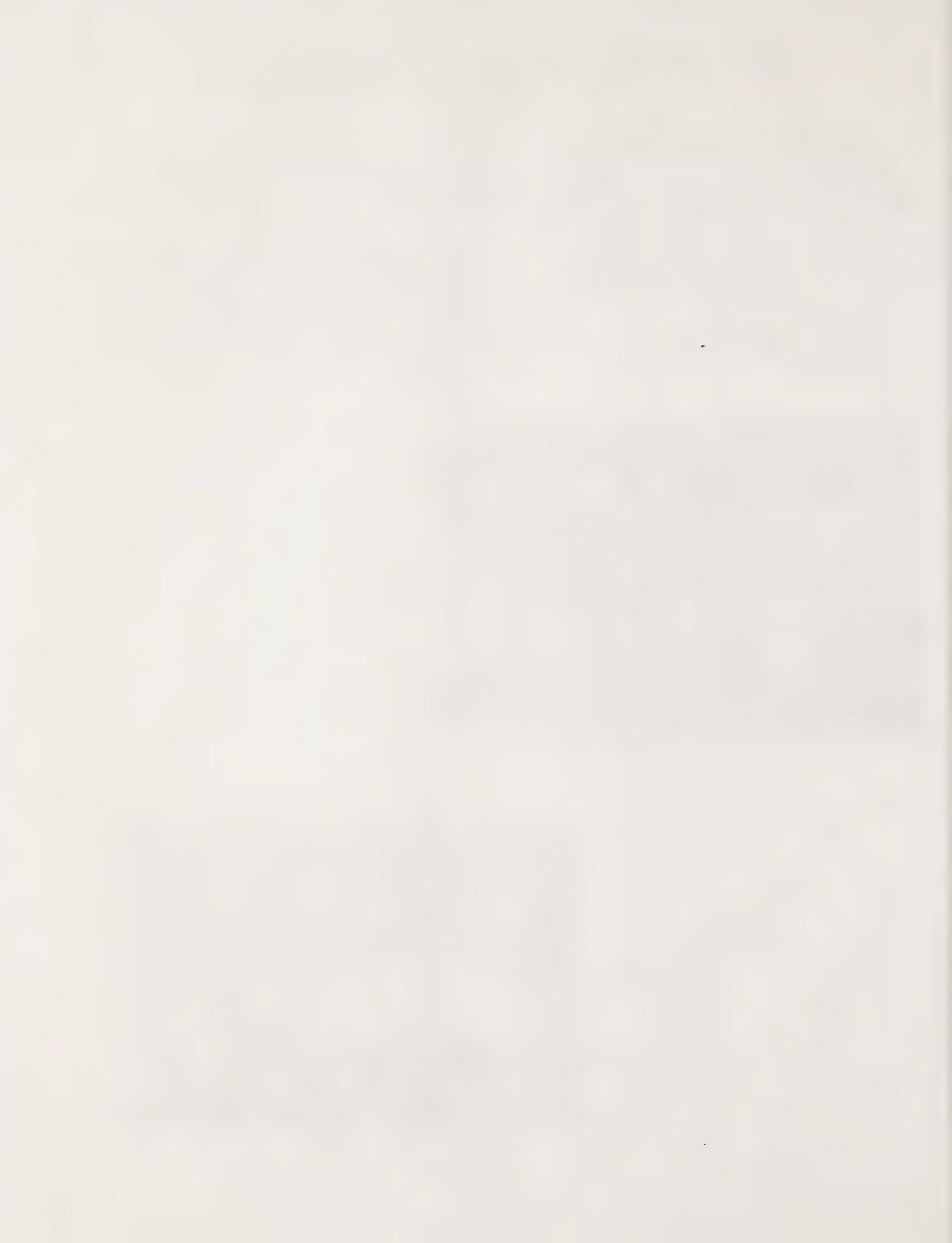
During the summer of 1962 the congregation again decided to make improvements to the building. Then, on August 28, the remodeling became a reality and ground was broken to enlarge the basement for a growing Sunday School and to install kitchen facilities for use by the congregation.



Before



After

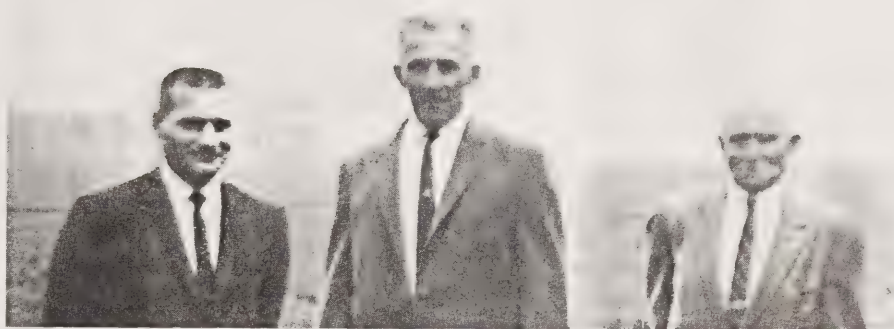


Members of Board of Deacons



From Left to Right: Mrs. Harvey Schmidt, Mrs. Calvin Schmidt, Mrs. Henry Rosenthal, Mr. Forrest Christison, Mrs. Irma Ahlmann, Mrs. Roy Schoeni.

Members of the Session



From Left to Right: Roy Schoeni, Reuben Schmidt, Henry Mauer.

Members of Board of Trustees and the Treasurer



From Left to Right: Walter Hembel, Treasurer, Donald Schmidt, Robert Wittenberger, Lester Wittenberger.

WOMEN'S SOCIETY

It has been told that many years ago the women were organized into a Ladies Aid. Because of traveling inconveniences and the many duties of busy farm housewives, this activity was discontinued.

Then, on April 5, 1960, a group of women of the church met and adopted By-Laws organizing themselves as "United Presbyterian Church Women of Richfield." The purpose of the group is to share a common faith in our Lord and Savior, to be united through the church, to proclaim the

gospel of Jesus Christ and demonstrate His love in all areas. Several projects such as sending clothing, first-aid kits, money, baby clothing, etc., to needy people have been undertaken and have been completed. The first officers of the group were Mrs. Viola Rosenthal, President; Mrs. Dorothy Wittenberger, Vice President; Mrs. Eleanor Christison, Secretary, and Mrs. Irma Ahlmann, Treasurer.

Shown below is our Women's Society.



Bottom Row: Dorothy Wittenberger, Dorothy Schmidt, Irma Ahlmann, Lorraine Schmidt.
2nd Row: Lillian Schmidt, Alyda Schmidt.
Top Row: Lorraine Schoeni, Eleanor Christison, Viola Rosenthal.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

The first Sunday School classes were held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Wittenberger. Later, classes were held at the pastor's home and in the church after regular worship services.

At present we have 16 children enrolled in Sunday School. The children are divided into various classes, according to age and ability.

We make use of the material prepared by the Board of Christian Education with headquarters in New York City. The material is sent

to us quarterly. Besides the actual class period we have a "Miniature Worship Service" with the children taking part in singing hymns, prayer, offering, etc.

The teachers are Mr. Calvin Schmidt, Superintendent; Mrs. Henry Rosenthal, Mr. Forrest Christison, Mrs. Calvin Schmidt, the Misses June Hembel and Janet Wittenberger.

Pictured below is the Sunday School and its teachers.



Bottom Row: June Hembel, Janet Wittenberger, Mrs. Henry Rosenthal.
Top Row: Forrest Christison, Mrs. Calvin Schmidt, Calvin Schmidt.



Bottom Row: Gerald Schultz, Jean Schoeni, Harold Schmidt, Randall Schmidt, Michael Schmidt.
2nd Row: Richard Schmidt, Elaine Schoeni, Nancy Schmidt, Carol Schmidt, Kathleen Schmidt.

3rd Row: James Wittenberger, Bonnie Schmidt, Leslie Schmidt, Alice Schoeni.
Top Row: Daniel Wittenberger, Mark Rosenthal, David Wittenberger, Ruth Ann Schmidt.

ORGANISTS

Since the very early days of our church, organ music has accompanied the singing of hymns. The Wittenberger family supplied the organ and also the people who played it. At first various members played the reed organ including Mary Frank (Wittenberger), Anna Schmidt (Wittenberger) with their brother August helping out in some cases. Later he took over this duty full-time playing for many, many years. Upon his resignation, the congregation presented him with a Bible, showing their appreciation

for his many years of service. Reverend Schildknecht would also play, when necessary, with a very spirited tempo.

When Mr. August Wittenberger was no longer able to play the organ, Mrs. Henry Rosenthal (Schmidt) took over at the young age of twelve. Since then she has been our organist playing faithfully every Sunday, first at the old pump organ (singing German hymns) and now at our electric organ.



Mary Frank (Wittenberger)



Anna Schmidt (Wittenberger)



August Wittenberger



Viola Rosenthal (Schmidt)

Message from our PASTOR

"The Lord God omnipotent reigneth!" These words describe aspects of the Christian faith which are particularly vital to the experience and life of the members of First Presbyterian Church, Richfield, Wisconsin. Here the sovereignty of God, as John Calvin found it in the Scriptures, is a living reality to what I am sure is one of the most loyal congregations in our nation.

The majority of the families of Richfield Church are dedicated Calvinists of German stock, an agricultural people. In their church life as well as in their farming, they have had the initiative and courage and flexibility to adjust their ideas and methods to the challenges of the day in which we live. Yet Paul, if living today, could address them in the vein in which he wrote to Timothy:

"I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you."

No one currently familiar with the congregation could miss the delightful, well disciplined, and happy children who make up the Sunday School and all of whom, together with children of pre-Sunday School age, attend the church worship service each week. From babes in arms on up, they are a tribute to the love and concern of fathers and mothers who take seriously the responsibility of Christian parenthood.

In recent years the congregation has broken fresh ground in such ways as the initiation of an annual Every Member Canvass; formation of a Board of Deacons; a steady increase in giving to the General Mission program of the Church; active participation by men in Laymen's Sunday; and later of youth on Youth Sunday and of women in Women's Day in the Church; holding of Thanksgiving Eve and Maundy Thursday services; participation in annual World Vision

Conferences; and the formation of an active association of United Presbyterian Women.

A little to the north of the Church lies a small cemetery where lie the bodies of men and women and some dear children, too, whose lives were closely knit with the life of the Church, whose influence lives on in the lives of the current generation of the people of Richfield Church, and whose souls have been gathered to their Lord.

The Church building stands near the south end of a rectangular plot of ground which includes lawns, the cemetery, and parking space, a large and beautiful spreading tree and attractive shrubbery. The location is that of a wide sweep of open, slightly rolling countryside in Wisconsin's Kettle Moraine, three miles west of the Village of Richfield. On winter mornings the wind often blows briskly over high banks of snow. In the summer a green carpet lies unrolled as far as eye can see. The deep blue of the Wisconsin skies favors both seasons of the year a great deal of the time. The hand of the Maker is readily traced in the setting with which nature has surrounded the Church building, as the influence of the Redeemer and the presence of the Spirit are witnessed to in the life of the congregation within.

It has been a rich privilege to have had a little part in the life of these dear people, to have broken the bread of life with them, to have conversed with them in lighter vein as well as seriously, regarding the things of everyday life as well as the things of Christ. They have been ever kindly, thoughtful and forbearing. On the happy occasion of this Centennial, my wife, Jean Dale, our sons, Keith and Dwight, and our daughter, Sharon Dale, all join me in expressing best of wishes in Christ and wishes for continued growth and usefulness as individuals and as a congregation for the future which lies ahead.



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